

THE CHINA BORNEO COMPANY, LIMITED.

The adjourned extraordinary general meeting of the shareholders of the above Company was held at the offices of the General Managers, Messrs. Gibb, Livingston & Co., on the 23rd inst. Mr. B. Layton presided, and there were present:—Messrs. C. S. Sharr, H. L. Dalrymple, J. Wheeler, A. P. Stokes (director) W. Judd, G. Fenwick, H. Wickham, E. A. Solomon, J. B. Gomes, G. S. Coxon, W. Farlane, A. G. Stokes, J. S. Perry, &c.

The Chairman briefly stated that the meeting was held for the further discussion of the accounts. He understood from the Company's solicitor that the passing of the accounts would have no effect or bearing upon the question of proceeding against Mr. Abrahamson.

Mr. Wickham—Since the meeting I have taken the opportunity of carefully reading Mr. Abrahamson's defence, and I think that anything more weak or deserving of contempt it would be difficult to imagine. He has the honesty to state that there are assets put down in the books that never existed, and that part, there is no difficulty in believing. Unfortunately for us, in another part of his defence he does his best to throw the responsibility on the juniors—the underwriters, which I think is not practicable, because Mr. Allard seems to have a very good defence—he says, in effect, that no-one knew better than Mr. Abrahamson himself that the wood was not worth more than a cent a foot. Knowing this (Mr. Abrahamson has got his returns from the jungle), he has the audacity to put it down in the accounts of 30 cents a foot. Everything seems to me, from the beginning to the end in connection with this Company, to have been done with a view to deceiving us, and, I believe, with a view to inflating the shares and enabling Mr. Abrahamson to get out.

The Chairman—I don't think that. Mr. Fenwick—He has tried to sell his shares. Mr. Wickham—He tried to sell them—he even tried to get up a syndicate, but the men he went to soon gave him to understand that he had come to the wrong quarter.

The Chairman—I don't think you are quite right. Mr. Wickham rejoined that Mr. Gomes had been invited to a private syndicate meeting by Mr. Abrahamson.

Mr. Gomes—No, that was in reference to another Company.

Mr. Wickham—There is another matter in connection with this Company on which we ought to have some information, I think, from our solicitors. At the time of the sale of the business of Messrs. Abrahamson and Co. to this Company, for the sum of \$100,000, Mr. Stokes was a partner with Mr. Abrahamson, and was interested in the transaction. I think that, as our solicitor, it was his duty to have protected our interests, and I don't see how he could do so when he was virtually acting for himself. Knowing the position of affairs I think the asking of such a sum was not what we had a right to expect, and there has nothing transpired since to justify it. Therefore I think it is desirable that Mr. Stokes should give us an explanation with regard to his action in the matter—it has not been alluded to before because it was a bill of exchange, but the Committee of Investigation, when Mr. Stokes was in England, but I think it was most improper, because with his own interests at stake—and human nature is human nature all over the world—he could not act with the same impartiality as if he was acting without any such interest. It is no use dealing with Mr. Abrahamson more than we have—we shall get no satisfaction out of him, and his conduct from first to last has been virtually beneath contempt.

Mr. Stokes—With regard to what you have said I am very glad you have given me this opportunity of explaining. I think Mr. Wickham is in error in saying that he had no opportunity of bringing this to the notice of the shareholders before.

Mr. Wickham—I could not, in your absence.

Mr. Stokes—When I was in England I read the account of what took place at the last general meeting, and I then saw a reference to my action in this matter, and as I am acting as vendor as well as solicitor, and I am glad of the opportunity of setting that right. In regard to what Mr. Wickham says I should like to point out that when the prospectus of this Company was issued the full information was given to the shareholders and all intending to subscribe, as to my relation to the firm of Abrahamson and Co.—it was set out in detail who composed the firm, and my name was included. So no-one can complain of any want of candour on my part. With regard to the point Mr. Wickham makes, that I could not act properly for the two interests, I may remind you that it is the usual thing, when the purchase and sale of a Company are effected, for one solicitor to act for both parties;—it is quite the exception when that is not the case.

Mr. Wickham—If a solicitor is concerned? I know of exceptions to that rule, most decidedly.

Mr. Stokes—I wish to point out that my connection with the firm of Abrahamson & Co. was fully disclosed. With regard to what I did as your solicitor, I only consisted of a few formal acts—I had no part in the negotiations, I only prepared the transfers and other documents, such as the Articles. And in doing that, I submit, no-one can complain that the work was not performed fairly towards both parties.

Mr. Wickham—What I complain of is the sanctioning of the payment of \$100,000 for a business with which you were familiar.

Mr. Stokes—I had nothing to do with it.

Mr. Wickham—Did you receive your portion of the money?

Mr. Stokes—Yes.

Mr. Wickham—I want it explained how you filed on \$100,000.

Mr. Stokes—The negotiations were not conducted by the sleeping partners.

Mr. Wickham—But they were consulted.

Mr. Stokes—Certainly, but they relied on Mr. Abrahamson.

The Chairman—I think this is straying from the subject.

Mr. Stokes—I should like a good opportunity to explain. The sleeping partners put in funds as an investment—they had no knowledge of the details—the whole responsibility rested with Mr. Abrahamson, who was the only person that could give details. The Sandakan law provides for such partnerships and the employment of capital belonging to sleeping partners. Only Mr. Abrahamson could have any knowledge of the fact that this Company was getting good value for its money—the point is that I took the whole of my interest in shares, and at the present time I hold a larger number than I did then; I regret to say I purchased a considerable number as late as October 1889, and when I left this Colony I fully believed it was a good investment. I regret still more that I did not, as I unfortunately supposed several of my friends to intend at the same time. I think my explanation is clear.

Mr. Wickham—I cannot understand.

The Chairman thought the matter irrelevant.

Mr. Wickham—I think this is properly preliminary to the winding-up of the Company which we are here to consider.

The Chairman—We should pass the accounts and then consider the Company's future.

Mr. Wickham—I think there is a strong objection to passing the accounts, from what I hear.

The Chairman pointed out that it was necessary.

Mr. Gomes—If we pass them we lose the right to prosecute Mr. Abrahamson, don't we?

The Chairman read the legal opinion on the subject, mentioned in his opening remarks, to show that they would still have that right.

Mr. Wickham—Then I see no objection to passing the accounts. Expressions of opinion were made to me to-day that we had better not pass them, but I believe it was purely for fear that we could not then take proceedings against Mr. Abrahamson if we wished.

The Chairman remarked that the meeting had not been held in April, but the accounts had been behind-hand.

Mr. Farlane said that at one of the meetings—the last annual general meeting—Mr. Francis spoke on the subject, and gave his opinion, which he thought was antagonistic to the one now put forward by the directors.

The Chairman referred to the report of the meeting and read what Mr. Francis had said. There had been a discussion as to passing the accounts before the adjournment of the meeting; some were in favour of passing them, and some against. Mr. Wickham proposed an adjournment to allow the committee of inquiry to consult with the directors. Mr. Francis said that, though in Mr. Wickham's remarks there was no want of trust in the management, yet the accounts were not sufficiently clear; but the strongest reason against adopting them was that when the meeting had adopted them they would thereby become the recorded opinion of the shareholders. But the Chairman continued, that opinion did not quite apply to this matter. The legal advisers of the Company said now that passing the accounts would not commit the shareholders to anything. But he did not press it if the meeting preferred a further postponement.

Mr. Fenwick pointed out that in the accounts presented the stock of timber in Borneo was valued at about \$4,000. Was timber lying in the forest put down at ten cents or thirty cents a foot?

The Chairman suggested it meant all the timber that was set-aside, not still in the jungle. It was all saleable timber.

Mr. Farlane asked the Chairman if he could explain the serious depreciation of the timber in Hongkong.

The Chairman replied that the matter had been dealt with by the committee of inquiry, and was given in their report.

Mr. Wickham mentioned the complaints about the large quantity of wood sent to Hongkong in bad condition. But one cure—us thing could not be overlooked. Mr. Abrahamson spoke of large quantities of ironwood being lost to the Company because it had been left so long lying on the ground rotting, though only cut a year ago. Now, it was supposed to be a wood that lasted for centuries, and practically impishable. He wondered if all this ironwood ever existed the thought it was better than put down as ironwood. It had only been cut a year or two ago, and now Mr. Abrahamson said it was so rotten, that it was not worth bringing down. It was a very great pity he was not here to exclaim.

Mr. Fenwick asked who it was that valued the stock when the Company took over the business and goodwill from Abrahamson & Co. for \$100,000. Was it the general manager or the promoters?

The Chairman said that at that time there was no general manager, but the valuation was made by a Mr. Flint, now dead, but then employed by the Government at Sandakan. Mr. Abrahamson got him to do it; he was an independent authority.

Were the promoters acquainted with Mr. Flint, or only Mr. Abrahamson?—It was agreed to accept his valuation.

The Chairman in the course of discussion gave details of the stock existing to the value of \$4,368, which he understood was all good merchantable wood, lying at various points, and valued respectively at 3, 7, 10, 12, up to 26 cents per foot.

Mr. Gomes pointed out that at 30 cents, as Mr. Abrahamson had put it, there should have been a profit. The coolies were paid fixed wages, and that should have been set off as cost, on the debit side; but there was no profit shown in his account.

Mr. Wickham—Because what he has been putting down at 30 cents was really timber still in the jungle, worth not more than 10.

Mr. Gomes—I should certainly think Abrahamson should be prosecuted by the directors.

The Chairman said they might sue him, and try to recover some of their money from him; but this was not the time to speak of that. At present the accounts were under discussion.

Mr. Fenwick agreed that it was perfectly certain that this could be done after the accounts had been passed. They should try and get their money back.

Mr. Gomes said that he believed Mr. Stokes and all the directors had been deceived by Abrahamson from the first. He was surprised at the amount of confidence they had placed in him.

Mr. Wickham—Everybody did who heard him speak.

The Chairman said many people had trusted him. Mr. Gomes himself had the same confidence.

Mr. Gomes—But after two or three interviews I lost it again.

On the motion of Mr. Wickham, seconded by Mr. Gomes, the accounts were passed.

Mr. Wickham said that it was proposed after this to hold a private meeting to consider matters connected with the winding up of the Company.

The Chairman did not mind whether the meeting be private or not. The only thing he wanted was an expression of opinion from the shareholders to show whether it was likely that the Company would be closed, because in that case according to the Articles of Association it would be necessary to call an extraordinary public meeting, of which a fortnight's notice was necessary, to pass any resolution for winding up or taking any steps towards selling the property.

Mr. Gomes suggested that the change in the management might enable the business to go on.

Mr. Wickham said that it was not possible to get men with a good practical experience to go to the place and do the work properly. Too much money had been sunk already, and it was better to wind up.

The Chairman said he had great confidence in the present management.

Mr. Wickham said the men could be trusted, but he did not think they had experience of the business.

Mr. Gomes—It is not experience we need; it is honesty.

Most of those present agreed that it was honesty that was wanted.

Mr. Fenwick said the Company had lost money through useless speculations. The Sandakan

mine, which was running to Haiphong, never could make money. He had always said she was a useless craft. The Sandakan was too small for the timber trade, and never could pay. The saw-mill here was the same—it would never pay. The saw-mill in Borneo never paid. He proposed that the meeting express itself in favour of calling a private meeting to discuss the winding up of the Company.

Mr. Wickham seconded the motion, which was carried.

Mr. Fenwick asked if the directors had expressed any opinion on the question.

The Chairman said that a long time ago they were in favour of winding up.

The public meeting then terminated.

THE TREATMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

At the meeting of the Sanitary Board yesterday afternoon (23rd inst.), a *grands* of the correspondence regarding a Hospital for the reception and treatment of cases of infectious disease was laid on the table. It had already been circulated amongst members, and the following minute by Dr. Canille was appended:—

"Concerning the Disposal of Infectious Persons.—Mr. McCallum's remarks concerning the disposal of infectious persons are sensible and apt. The same arguments come up time after time. *1st. To every sick infectious person to be sent to Hospital.*—Mr. McCallum's remarks help to convince one that such is not intended. Provided the infected person can be disposed of by having (a) either a separate floor, with a nurse, who shall have access only to the patient, all that is requisite is thereby attained; (b) or a separate room isolated from the house traffic with an attendant. *2nd. The Chinese will not go to the Hospital.*—Any medical practitioner in Hongkong, who has intimate dealings with Chinese sick, will know that this is a fanciful and untenable statement. I find less difficulty in persuading Chinese of the coolie class (male or female) to go to Hospital than I found amongst the lower classes in London and still less than amongst the labouring classes of the country throughout Britain. The numbers of Chinese who flock to the Allco Memorial Hospital, not only as out-patients but as in-patients, not only as free patients, but as paying patients, is surely a sufficient answer to such arguments. Again, the proportion of Chinese sick to the population who attend the Allco Memorial Hospital is slightly higher than the number which attend Hospital even in London, where the Hospital system is acknowledged to be abused. I hope that these statements will help to dispel the delusion which exists as to the Chinese not doing this and that, when wanted, to in sickness. And it is only natural that they should give up much less in the way of home comfort, especially in sickness, than do most Europeans of the lower classes. Many if not the most of the coolie class in Hongkong are here only as immigrants, and therefore more likely to be persuaded to leave their dwelling as it is not generally their home. For all these reasons, without dealing with the question as a danger to the community, but simply as affecting the sick individual and his feelings and the possibility of getting him to go to Hospital, I believe that the often repeated statements as to the impossibility of getting the Chinese to be dealt with as the Board require are exaggerated.

"Hospital for Infectious Diseases.—The resumed consideration of a Hospital for infectious diseases (capable of attaining an epidemic form) is instructive, and the recommendations of the Board as stated in the accompanying circular dated June 4th, 1888, are most interesting. The Board's recommendation of a permanent building, with a skeleton framing, capable of speedy construction, seems to have been the deliberate conclusion and advice of the Board to the Government. Yet, instead, the Colony possesses a floating hospital, constructed without the knowledge or recommendation of the Board. In fact, the Board has no official information that such a place of reception for infected sick exists; and until the matter was inadvertently brought up by myself at the Board meeting, June 1889, its existence was never mentioned at the Board. At that meeting no official statement was made as to its purpose; in fact, an opposite communication was conveyed and all attempts at opening the hospital made by myself were combated by the members of the Board then present. The expense was considered prohibitive by one member; the impossibility of getting patients, Chinese or European, to go there by other members, was advanced as arguments against its use. The question 'what was the Hospital to be used for?' was shelved, my proposition could not find a second hearing. The Board, at that meeting, by their silence, gave their assent to other means of dealing with those infected than by relying upon any help in that quarter. Unless the question is decidedly brought forward by some member of the Board, the existence of the Hospital so far as the Board is concerned must remain in *tabula*. The further steps to be taken seem to me (unless the Board means to stultify its own actions), to ask the Government for a reply to the recommendation of the Board sent in June 4th, 1888. Should the Board receive a reply that the recommendations then put forward had not been acted upon, but that the Hospital had been built, and it is then for the Board to decide whether or not it is to be used as a place of reception for infected persons, and if so, whether or not it is to be used as a place of reception for infected persons capable of attaining an epidemic form."

Another minute had been made by the Registrar-General as follows:—"I reserve the remarks I have to make on this subject until it is brought up for discussion at the next meeting of the Board." Dr. Canille is not correct when he says that no official statement was made at the meeting held in June last as to the purpose for which the Hospital is intended. A letter from the Colonial Secretary expressly stating its object was read. This letter should be produced when this question is again discussed."

A minute by the President was as follows:—"The Chairman's report of the Local Government Board on the severe nature of the epidemic at Suifu in 1888, and the fact that it was caused by a smallpox hospital in the centre of a town, is a most interesting and valuable contribution to the knowledge of the disease."

Dr. Canille said he should like to know from the Secretary whether the Board had any official information from the Government that the Hospital was in existence. Were they supposed to take cognizance of it in their treatment of infectious diseases? The letter received the other day seemed to him the first intimation that there was such a thing as the Hospital in existence.

The Secretary said that beyond the letter from the Colonial Secretary read at a meeting of the Board a month ago he had received no information whatever.

The Registrar-General said that in the minute he had written on the subject he expressly called attention to the fact that the letter referred to had been laid on the table, because Dr. Canille stated that the Board had no official information on the subject and that until he had called up the question at that meeting they had no official information.

The Government had told them what the Hospital was built for, and that letter was in possession of the Board; and was read, and related to more than once.

Dr. Canille said he thought the letter from the Colonial Secretary must have been dragged out of the Government by the President's question. They did not get any nearer the truth at the meeting referred to as to what the Hospital was built for, when it was to be opened, or who was to open it. They were told by the Colonial Surgeon, who was in charge of the Hospital, that the expense was prohibitive—he did not think he exaggerated when he said he was led to understand the expense of opening the Hospital was prohibitive. All they wanted to know as a Board was whether it was possible to have the Hospital for the purposes of quarantine or for use in case of an epidemic. They were told it was intended for those purposes, but they were also told that it was so expensive that it was impossible to open it. But to open it for what? The term quarantine he supposed applied not only to passengers arriving by vessels but to persons affected with illness on shore. When an epidemic was threatened in Hongkong it was certainly consistent that the Board should have some means of dealing with the danger; they ought to be some station to which people affected with disease could be sent. In that sense he took quarantine to mean that they must quarantine people who were infected. Now the position that was taken with regard to the Hospital at the meeting about a month ago was absolutely untenable. It was said in effect that it could not be opened for anything, that there was no key to this wonderful place, that it was too expensive. The business of the Board was to prevent epidemic, and if the Hospital was not to be used for the purpose of preventing epidemic the sooner they took some other steps the better. Who would sit down and wait for an epidemic in these days? What they had to do was to prevent the epidemic. If the Hospital was not available for that purpose they must adopt other measures. He did not believe the expense was too great. It was true that when an epidemic did come it should find them as easily dealt with as Dr. Canille seemed to think they could be. But were any people in the colony who became infected to be removed whatever their surroundings might be? That could not be done. If a person occupied a house in which proper provision could be made for him there was no necessity or power to remove him at all; he could only be removed when there was no proper accommodation for him. He thought it would be well to remove the impression that people could be compulsorily removed in all cases. He knew that during the absence of some, when this subject was being discussed, there was some apprehension that removal was to be compulsory. Chinese presented a numerous, signed petition praying that there might be no interference with their family life in the way of the compulsory removal of any member of the family, who became affected with infectious disease. There was one point which Dr. Canille had not touched upon in his speech at all, although he had in his minute, and that was the matter of an epidemic hospital on shore. Dr. Canille seemed to be of opinion that in addition to the floating hospital they should have some means of housing people on shore. Many proposals had been made, amongst others that of the Sanitary Board, of which the Government had taken no notice. If it were thought desirable to have an epidemic hospital on shore it could easily be arranged. Sites might be chosen at each end of the town (in order to do away with the necessity of patients being taken all through the town), and be levelled and so arranged that matches could be run up on them without delay. That was a matter that could be arranged at very slight expense and would be very useful in the event of any outbreak which as had visited us in the past and might visit us in the future. The Sanitary Board formerly recommended iron stanchions for the framework, but seeing that they lived amongst people who were unequalled in the world for the speed with which they could run up structures of a durable nature, he thought they ought to utilize their skill in that direction instead of having iron stanchions. Seeing there was such a small attendance at the meeting and that this was a matter of some importance, he thought it would be only fair to the other members that the Board should not to-day come to any definite decision. He was sure Dr. Canille would not mind holding over the question to next meeting, when they might have some more discussion on it, though it might perhaps be thought they had had enough; but at any rate, he thought they ought to give the Colonial Surgeon an opportunity of seeing them his views on the subject, especially seeing comments had been made on what he had said on a previous occasion and he had not had an opportunity of replying. He therefore moved that the matter be deferred to the next meeting.

Dr. Canille seconded the motion, and in doing so said it must not be forgotten we had a quarantine house on Stone-cutters Island. This had apparently been lost sight of. It was a first-rate house. He believed it was now not available owing to the action of the military authorities, who said they could not have a quarantine station in the middle of a work. Therefore this house was no longer available, and in its place we had got the Hospital. He therefore thought they might regard the Hospital as a quarantine station. Adopting that view he thought the suggestion of the Registrar-General was a good one, to have an epidemic hospital at each end of the town. It would not be necessary to have two doctors; one could attend to both, with good ward-masters in charge. The question could very well be left over to the next meeting; but he did not think what had been said was altogether waste of words, even though they had not quite agreed.

The President said he agreed that it was desirable to adjourn the consideration of the question to the next meeting, but there were one or two points to which he might refer. There was this difficulty in handing over the Hospital to the Sanitary Board, that in case of an epidemic the Board had no medical officer or nursing staff to place in charge of the patients. Again, although in case of emergency the Hospital might be used to a certain extent both for epidemic and quarantine cases, it was clear to his mind that such an arrangement could not be satisfactory as a permanent one. Suppose an epidemic of smallpox and quarantine for cholera were to occur at the same time, the people to be quarantined would naturally object to being taken to a place occupied by the quarantine cases, which had recently been so completely disinfected. This suggestion thrown out by the Registrar-General seemed worthy of consideration, and he thought it probable some solution of the difficulty might be found on those lines at a very moderate expense. Another thing that struck him with regard to the Hospital was that in case of a very severe epidemic the bulk would not be large enough, whereas if arrangements were made for the erection of matches on large open spaces the accommodation might be increased as the demand arose.

The Acting Captain Superintendent of Police, in reply to Dr. Canille, said the Colonial Surgeon had charge of the Hospital. The police were there for a very short time, but they were in addition to care taken provided by the Medical Department, but he did not think they would very likely be required for quarantine purposes on account of cholera at Suifu the police were removed.

It was then arranged that the matter should stand over, Dr. Canille's motion to agree on the orders of the day for the next meeting.

THE SUNDAY LABOUR QUESTION.

The following is the petition against the Sunday Labour Ordinance, which has received 27 signatures, and was forwarded to the Secretary of State by the mail yesterday (23rd inst.).

To the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir,

I, the undersigned, respectfully shew that the Ordinance, which was introduced into the Legislative Council on the 26th day of April last, and was passed on the 29th day of May last, is a most oppressive and unjust law, and is a gross violation of the rights of the Chinese people.

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decide that the epidemic was imminent? With regard to the Hospital, he thought the Board had not been sufficiently consulted. The President of the correspondence showed that some years ago the Sanitary Board, after careful consideration, made certain definite recommendations to the Government, but they never got any reply until they were finally informed the Hospital was built and ready. He thought the Board ought to receive more consideration at the hands of the Government. He thought the Board ought also to have been consulted as to whether the vessel should be used for quarantine as well as for an epidemic hospital. Dr. Canille had brought forward a motion to the effect that the Hospital should be handed over to the control of the Board. He saw one difficulty in regard to this, and that was that the Hospital, in addition to being intended for the purposes of an epidemic hospital was also intended as a quarantine station, and it was the Health Officer, who was not a member of the Board, who was responsible for moving people from ships to the quarantine station. Dr. Canille had also pointed out that the Chinese were not the prejudiced race of mortals they were represented to be. The statement he was sure would be grateful intelligence to many, and a surprise to not a few, and it was to be hoped that when an epidemic did come it should find them as easily dealt with as Dr. Canille seemed to think they could be. But were any people in the colony who became infected to be removed whatever their surroundings might be? That could not be done. If a person occupied a house in which proper provision could be made for him there was no necessity or power to remove him at all; he could only be removed when there was no proper accommodation for him. He thought it would be well to remove the impression that people could be compulsorily removed in all cases. He knew that during the absence of some, when this subject was being discussed, there was some apprehension that removal was to be compulsory. Chinese presented a numerous, signed petition praying that there might be no interference with their family life in the way of the compulsory removal of any member of the family, who became affected with infectious disease. There was one point which Dr. Canille had not touched upon in his speech at all, although he had in his minute, and that was the matter of an epidemic hospital on shore. Dr. Canille seemed to be of opinion that in addition to the floating hospital they should have some means of housing people on shore. Many proposals had been made, amongst others that of the Sanitary Board, of which the Government had taken no notice. If it were thought desirable to have an epidemic hospital on shore it could easily be arranged. Sites might be chosen at each end of the town (in order to do away with the necessity of patients being taken all through the town), and be levelled and so arranged that matches could be run up on them without delay. That was a matter that could be arranged at very slight expense and would be very useful in the event of any outbreak which as had visited us in the past and might visit us in the future. The Sanitary Board formerly recommended iron stanchions for the framework, but seeing that they lived amongst people who were unequalled in the world for the speed with which they could run up structures of a durable nature, he thought they ought to utilize their skill in that direction instead of having iron stanchions. Seeing there was such a small attendance at the meeting and that this was a matter of some importance, he thought it would be only fair to the other members that the Board should not to-day come to any definite decision. He was sure Dr. Canille would not mind holding over the question to next meeting, when they might have some more discussion on it, though it might perhaps be thought they had had enough; but at any rate, he thought they ought to give the Colonial Surgeon an opportunity of seeing them his views on the subject, especially seeing comments had been made on what he had said on a previous occasion and he had not had an opportunity of replying. He therefore moved that the matter be deferred to the next meeting.

Dr. Canille seconded the motion, and in doing so said it must not be forgotten we had a quarantine house on Stone-cutters Island. This had apparently been lost sight of. It was a first-rate house. He believed it was now not available owing to the action of the military authorities, who said they could not have a quarantine station in the middle of a work. Therefore this house was no longer available, and in its place we had got the Hospital. He therefore thought they might regard the Hospital as a quarantine station. Adopting that view he thought the suggestion of the Registrar-General was a good one, to have an epidemic hospital at each end of the town. It would not be necessary to have two doctors; one could attend to both, with good ward-masters in charge. The question could very well be left over to the next meeting; but he did not think what had been said was altogether waste of words, even though they had not quite agreed.

The President said he agreed that it was desirable to adjourn the consideration of the question to the next meeting, but there were one or two points to which he might refer. There was this difficulty in handing over the Hospital to the Sanitary Board, that in case of an epidemic the Board had no medical officer or nursing staff to place in charge of the patients. Again, although in case of emergency the Hospital might be used to a certain extent both for epidemic and quarantine cases, it was clear to his mind that such an arrangement could not be satisfactory as a permanent one. Suppose an epidemic of smallpox and quarantine for cholera were to occur at the same time, the people to be quarantined would naturally object to being taken to a place occupied by the quarantine cases, which had recently been so completely disinfected. This suggestion thrown out by the Registrar-General seemed worthy of consideration, and he thought it probable some solution of the difficulty might be found on those lines at a very moderate expense. Another thing that struck him with regard to the Hospital was that in case of a very severe epidemic the bulk would not be large enough, whereas if arrangements were made for the erection of matches on large open spaces the accommodation might be increased as the demand arose.

The Acting Captain Superintendent of Police, in reply to Dr. Canille, said the Colonial Surgeon had charge of the Hospital. The police were there for a very short time, but they were in addition to care taken provided by the Medical Department, but he did not think they would very likely be required for

THE SANITARY BOARD.

**THE LATEST THING IN
PETITIONS.**

before. Moreover, in many cases—we purposely refrain at the present moment

British ship, 1,999 tons register; *Geo. Thompson*,
British barque, 1,128 tons register; *Victoria*,
Norwegian barque, 899 tons register;

The Chinese squadron sailed from Yokohama on the morning of the 18th inst. for Corea.

The British cruiser *Porpoise* sailed from Yokohama on the 16th inst. for the Behring Sea.

The directors of the Hotel des Colonies, Ltd., at Shanghai, have declared an interim dividend of 3 per cent.

A fire took place at Foochow on the 18th inst. in a village close the Race-course, and seven houses were destroyed.

The Olympia Skating Rink at Shanghai is being conducted with great energy, and new attractions are constantly provided. On Saturday last there was a two-mile race for \$10.

Comparing the depth of water on the Wooning Bay on the same days of the moon, it is stated that there is less water this year than there was last. The outer bar is also silted up.

The *Peking Gazette* of 4th July states that Sun-fan, a Manchou, lately Provincial Treasurer of Szechuan, has been appointed Governor of Kueichow. He is succeeded in Szechuan by Kung Chao-yuan, lately Taoist of Shanghai.

The Customs' Revenue cruiser *Phinghwa* left Shanghai on the 23rd for the Hainan Sea, and had on the board the Commissioner of Customs, the Coast Inspector, and the Engineer-in-Chief. It is presumed that the intention of the Customs is to put a light on the Hainan Sea.

According to the *Echo* there is a fresh epidemic of sickness amongst the natives at Foochow, which notwithstanding the carrying out of the tallies during the past week was so far powerless to remove. On this occasion the sickness arises from eating unripe fruit. The mortality in several of the shops in the near neighbourhood has been considerable this week.

We hear that after the recent typhoon over fifty people were rescued by two Chinese Customs cruisers near Fuh-tai-chai, in the Ly-ré-mun Pass, a considerable number being drowned. During the storm a disabled junk that was drifting down the Pass was boarded by the crew of another junk, who, instead of rendering help, stripped the helpless craft and cleared out.

At the Magistrate's yesterday an inquiry was held as to the death of a Chinese woman in Peel Street on Sunday. She had lost all her money pawning, and ended her troubles with opium. A verdict of suicide was returned. An inquiry was also held as to the death of a Chinaman who jumped from the first floor of a house in Queen's Road when he heard the next house falling. Verdict—death from concussion of the brain.

Heaven be praised, for we are to have pure tea at last—tea guaranteed to be free from adulteration. We learn from native sources that the Kueikiang Prefect has issued a proclamation, saying that he has recently heard that a great number of the women and girls employed by the Kueikiang tea-merchants this season for picking tea are bad characters, who carry on illicit traffic with the young men of the place. The Prefect gives warning that the parties concerned will be severely punished, and he cautions the tea-merchants to be more careful in the selection of their pickers for the future.

H.M.S. *Twined*, it is expected, will be raised safely at next spring tide; everything is in readiness. It appears that an unknown rock, which was in the way of floating her from the perilous position where she stranded, was the cause of the second disaster, and it is hoped the Naval authorities, backed by the Government of the Canton, will see their way to let the *Twined* and *Twined* remain in future as guardships off Shomoen. These vessels will prove of service which they never can lyne here or elsewhere. They will be available at a few hours notice when wanted, and will be all along in an efficient state through continuously in fresh water, which will preserve their hulls, whilst at the same time any risk they run in the Canton river is reduced to a minimum.

Captain E. A. Barnett, Commandant, who has recently returned to Sandakan, has supplied the *Herald* with an account of a trip to the head of the Padas River. Captain Barnett left Labuan on April 22nd, arrived at Sungai Rayo May 1st, and started for the Katpaka Company arriving there on May 15th, the force under Captain Barnett's orders numbering thirty-four non-commissioned officers and, also some 75 Dyak auxiliaries, eight of whom were armed with muzzle-loading guns. The first night on arrival Captain Barnett's party were attacked, and two officers—baptized coolies—were wounded. Next morning the Katpaks were met in force, but they apparently did not care to come to close quarters, being content with firing at long range. The Constabulary carried a hill and occupied a long house 150 yards long. After heavy firing the enemy were driven from the hill, one Dyak being badly wounded in the leg. The enemy kept up a desultory fire upon the house to which our men did not reply except by firing at exposed enemies, but showed a white flag at 2 p.m. Captain Barnett went out with Messrs. Wheatley and Wise, armed, and a long palaver ensued. The enemy generally retiring and opening fire, which they kept up till evening. Our men heard that they could not understand why the police did not return their fire. The interpreter as a rule said our men were short of ammunition. After collecting all the paddy, jars, guns, etc., Captain Barnett decided to return on May 20th. On the morning of that day the enemy were outflanked and taken by surprise, and retreated along the whole line. Captain Barnett and party got back to Sapong on June 1st. The casualties on our side were three men wounded by bullets and one disabled by a fall. The enemy are all armed with fire arms, are numerous, and apparently have plenty of ammunition.

THE SUNDAY REST BILL'S SUPPORTERS.

WHY THEY DIDN'T SIGN THE PETITION.

Having in our last issue given the opinions of the signatories to the petition against the Sunday Cargoworking Ordinance, we now give a few reasons advanced by supporters of the Bill for refusing to sign.

Mr. Osborne, Secretary of the Kowloon Wharf and Godown Company, said:—Our company permanently employ about 500 coolies who are paid by the month. It is therefore apparently to our benefit, to have the Ordinance repealed, so that they can work seven days a week. But, I find that when they work constantly from morning till night, and sometimes late into the night, they are jaded; we can get as much work, or more, out of them by giving them a day's rest every week. Our European staff have never had a rest on a Sunday at all, hitherto, and they, and all the captains and officers, I have known to be on the subject, are heartily in favour of the Ordinance. My experience is that all the Chinese who have been having the Chinese day on Sunday, I have seen at least 100 men, and I have worked on Sundays as much as most men in Hongkong, and I prefer a day's rest, and I believe in others having one as

well. Even before this measure was introduced we allowed the European employees to cease work at noon on Sundays, whenever I could, to let them recuperate. I don't think any firm is more interested in the matter than our Company, as far as ocean steamers are concerned, and we entirely agree with the Ordinance.

Our representative then called on one or two other who had refused to sign, but was unable to gather any expression of opinion from them. He then visited several of the Indian firms who were understood to have signed both the petition for Sunday Rest and the recent one against it.

Mr. R. Shewan and Co., agents for the China and Manila Steamship Company, hadn't time to give any reasons except that he was not in favor of Sunday labour.

Mr. Montague Bear, shipping clerk in Butterfield and Swire's, was next interviewed. He admitted that he had signed Sunday labour in the harbor. The last one I admit that I didn't sign, but I was assured by Mr. E. C. Ray, who was in charge of it, that its only object was to get the operation of the Bill postponed for two months, and reconsidered, as in its present form, and as rushed through Council, it requires revision. I understand that it embodies the principle of Mr. Goldsmith's petition, with some slight modifications. The Ordinance, at present, restricts the right of a few men to work on a Sunday, and I don't hold with that—the principle should be made universal, or not touched at all. This idea that seems to prevail that any shipping clerks have been coerced into signing, is all humbug. I work on a Sunday myself. I would as soon work on that day as on a Monday, or a Friday, because I only work at all, on any day, from necessity. If you stop ships' officers from working on Sundays why not stop everybody? I object to this partial legislation. It doesn't matter to our firm, as agents, but we object to it, on principle.

Another employee in the same firm, also a signatory of both petitions (who at the last moment, "on second thoughts," declined to allow his name to be published) said:—I signed Mr. Goldsmith's petition because I agreed with the principle of not forcing men to work on Sundays, but I signed the last petition because I objected to the form of legislation. If people are obliged to work why stop them by law? Why stop people from working over-time? It will be, especially hard on German ships' officers. A circular was sent round among the leading shipping firms some time ago, with a view to their agreeing to make Sunday labour among the officers optional, but the agents of the Indo-China S. N. Co. refused to sign, and it fell through.

Mr. J. J. Kewick, of Jardine Matheson & Co., said:—I never had any idea of signing. I have all along been in favor of the Ordinance, but the present form, although your paper and the other said that when the deputation from the Mercantile Marine Officers' Association to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce last year I was very much opposed to the views expressed by Capt. Ashton. As a matter of fact I was in complete accord with them, but I tried to elicit some information, and could not. When the question came before the Council, after long debate among the general public, the only difficulty I felt was as to making the Bill fair and practicable. In my opinion that has been done, and any hardship obviated. It seems to me that if the principle of granting permits for Sunday labour is practicable in Treaty ports it is perfectly practicable here. That is, I don't separate the two things. The only question that can possibly arise is whether the cost of the permit, as fixed by the Ordinance, is reasonable or not. If it is not, I, the opponents of the Bill submit a fairer tariff; if it is I see no further ground for complaint on their part. I think it is decidedly reasonable. As to the statement that this firm ever refused to co-operate with the other shipping firms in making Sunday labour optional, all I know is that during my absence some such memorandum was circulated, and sent back until my return. It was never submitted again. As a matter of fact, after the conference between the Officers' Association and the Chamber of Commerce we made preparations to carry out such an arrangement, as far as the officers in the Indo-China boats were concerned—indeed they have always been free to work or not on Sundays, as they liked. The wonder to me is how such a petition as this just sent home was signed by even the few who did.

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Another employee in the same firm, also a signatory of both petitions (who at the last moment, "on second thoughts," declined to allow his name to be published) said:—I signed Mr. Goldsmith's petition because I agreed with the principle of not forcing men to work on Sundays, but I signed the last petition because I objected to the form of legislation. If people are obliged to work why stop them by law? Why stop people from working over-time? It will be, especially hard on German ships' officers. A circular was sent round among the leading shipping firms some time ago, with a view to their agreeing to make Sunday labour among the officers optional, but the agents of the Indo-China S. N. Co. refused to sign, and it fell through.

Mr. J. J. Kewick, of Jardine Matheson & Co., said:—I never had any idea of signing. I have all along been in favor of the Ordinance, but the present form, although your paper and the other said that when the deputation from the Mercantile Marine Officers' Association to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce last year I was very much opposed to the views expressed by Capt. Ashton. As a matter of fact I was in complete accord with them, but I tried to elicit some information, and could not. When the question came before the Council, after long debate among the general public, the only difficulty I felt was as to making the Bill fair and practicable. In my opinion that has been done, and any hardship obviated. It seems to me that if the principle of granting permits for Sunday labour is practicable in Treaty ports it is perfectly practicable here. That is, I don't separate the two things. The only question that can possibly arise is whether the cost of the permit, as fixed by the Ordinance, is reasonable or not. If it is not, I, the opponents of the Bill submit a fairer tariff; if it is I see no further ground for complaint on their part. I think it is decidedly reasonable. As to the statement that this firm ever refused to co-operate with the other shipping firms in making Sunday labour optional, all I know is that during my absence some such memorandum was circulated, and sent back until my return. It was never submitted again. As a matter of fact, after the conference between the Officers' Association and the Chamber of Commerce we made preparations to carry out such an arrangement, as far as the officers in the Indo-China boats were concerned—indeed they have always been free to work or not on Sundays, as they liked. The wonder to me is how such a petition as this just sent home was signed by even the few who did.

Mr. E. L. Woodie, agent of the P. and O. mail steamers, said:—I signed the petition, but did not do so in the name of the Company altogether, though I don't think our directors are very pleased with the Ordinance. It is an entirely new hard on managers, because they are so much of unimpeded. We have a fortnightly service, and our last three boats from home have all been here on a Sunday—the next will be well, probably. Yes, the officers had to work on the Sunday; it is part of their service.

Mr. Andrew Johnston, a leading engineer, gave a little interesting information as to the effect of the Bill as regarded the members of his profession. He said:—The engineers get their Sunday off at present as a rule. Certainly there are often repairs to be done in port, but they are serious when they are done at the Dock, when they don't work on a Sunday except in case of emergency, and if they are not so urgent or important they are usually left over Sunday. But the engineers are in favor of the Ordinance, to a man.

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See "Anti-Slavery" notice below.

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THE COOLIES AND SUNDAY WORK.

To the Editor of the "Hongkong Telegraph." Sir,—It may be of interest to you to know what a compulsory authority wrote to me as far back as 1885 on the above subject. My correspondence was as follows:—

"The wages of cargo-coolies in this colony average from \$3 to \$4 per month, the employers, in addition, providing 'chow-chow' and 'samahs.' In Swatow and Amoy the wages average a trifle lower than these figures. The men are not at all 'free-work,' and it has already been telegraphically demonstrated elsewhere that in the case of the half-holiday movement, the 'free-work' of a 'free-work' man is not a day's rest, but a day's rest, and I believe in others having one as

well. Even before this measure was introduced we allowed the European employees to cease work at noon on Sundays, whenever I could, to let them recuperate. I don't think any firm is more interested in the matter than our Company, as far as ocean steamers are concerned, and we entirely agree with the Ordinance.

Our representative then called on one or two other who had refused to sign, but was unable to gather any expression of opinion from them. He then visited several of the Indian firms who were understood to have signed both the petition for Sunday Rest and the recent one against it.

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